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Wadi Haddad, Palestinian Hijacking Strategist, Dies

By RAYMOND H. ANDERSON

Dr. Wadi Haddad, the strategist behind the Palestinian guerrilla movement's hijacking of airliners and a shadowy figure linked to international terrorist groups, has died of cancer in a hospital in East Germany, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine announced in Lebanon yesterday.

The Popular Front, which Dr. Haddad founded in 1966 along with Dr. George Habash, said that he "died as a hero" on Tuesday.

The body of the 49-year-old physician was flown yesterday to Baghdad, Iraq, one of the Arab cities where the underground leader had been living out of public view in recent years. Palestinians in Beirut, Lebanon, said he would be brought there for burial at the Palestinians' "Martyr's Cemetery."

Dr. Haddad was at the head of Israel's list of wanted terrorists. He went underground after rockets were fired into his Beirut apartment in July 1970.

Directed First Hijacking

The guerrilla leader directed the first airliner hijacking by Palestinians, involving the seizure of an Israeli plane, an El Al airliner, in July 1968 and its diversion to Algeria.

Last October, already confined by his illness, he was the strategist behind the most recent major hijacking, the takeover of a Lufthansa airliner that was ultimately stormed in Somalia by West German commandos.

One of the most dramatic terrorist actions that Dr. Haddad planned was the hijacking of four airliners in September 1970 and the blowing up of three of them in the desert of Jordan and of the fourth at the Cairo airport.

That gesture of defiance by the Palestinians to Egypt's acceptance of a cease-fire with Israel backfired and led to Jordanian suppression of the guerrilla movement in Jordan.

Split With Popular Front

In 1972 Dr. Haddad split with the Marxist-oriented Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine in a dispute over airliner hijackings.

In 1976 he and other supporters of hijackings were formally ousted by the Popular Movement, whose leader, Dr. Habash, had come to regard the seizure of airliners as more damaging than beneficial to the Palestinian fight against Israel.

Dr. Haddad was born in Haifa, now in Israel, into a Greek Orthodox family. His father was a teacher. A refugee after the creation of Israel in 1948, he studied in Beirut, where one of his closest classmates in the American University Medical School was Dr. Habash, the co-founder of the Popular Front.

After graduation, Dr. Haddad did social work in Palestinian refugee camps, and he and Dr. Habash formed a group called the Arab Nationalist Movement, intended for struggle against Israel. This developed into the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

As a guerrilla leader, Dr. Haddad shunned the spotlight. A guerrilla in Lebanon was quoted yesterday as having said of him: "He was a real revolutionary. He did what he thought was best for the Palestinian cause, without publicizing himself."

Dr. Haddad had close ties with some of the most notorious international terrorist groups, including the Baader-Meinhof gang in West Germany and the Red Army in Japan. He was also linked to the Venezuelan terrorist known as Carlos.

Dr Haddad was reported to have been the planner of the Tel Aviv airport attack by the Japanese Red Army in May 1972, in which the attackers pulled submachine guns and grenades from suitcases in the airport terminal and opened fire, killing nearly 30 people and wounding doens.

He was also said to have been involved in planning the hijacking of an Air France plane to Uganda in July 1976, which ended with an assault by Israeli commandos to free the hostages ,many of them

Uncertainty Over Effect

Dr. Haddad's terrorist ventures were said to have been financed by Arab sectors opposed to any peaceful settlement with Israel, among them the Libyans.

There was uncertainty among Palestinians in Beirut yesterday over the effect of Dr. Haddad's death on guerrilla tactics and international terrorism in general.

No certain successor was in sight to command the splinter group headed by Dr. Haddad, called the P.L.F.—Foreign Operations Branch But analysts in Beirut said they thought a guerrilla with the code name of Abu Nidal, who operates from Iraq, might take over

Some Palestinians reported that Dr. Haddad had hoped before his death to create a terrorist network in the United

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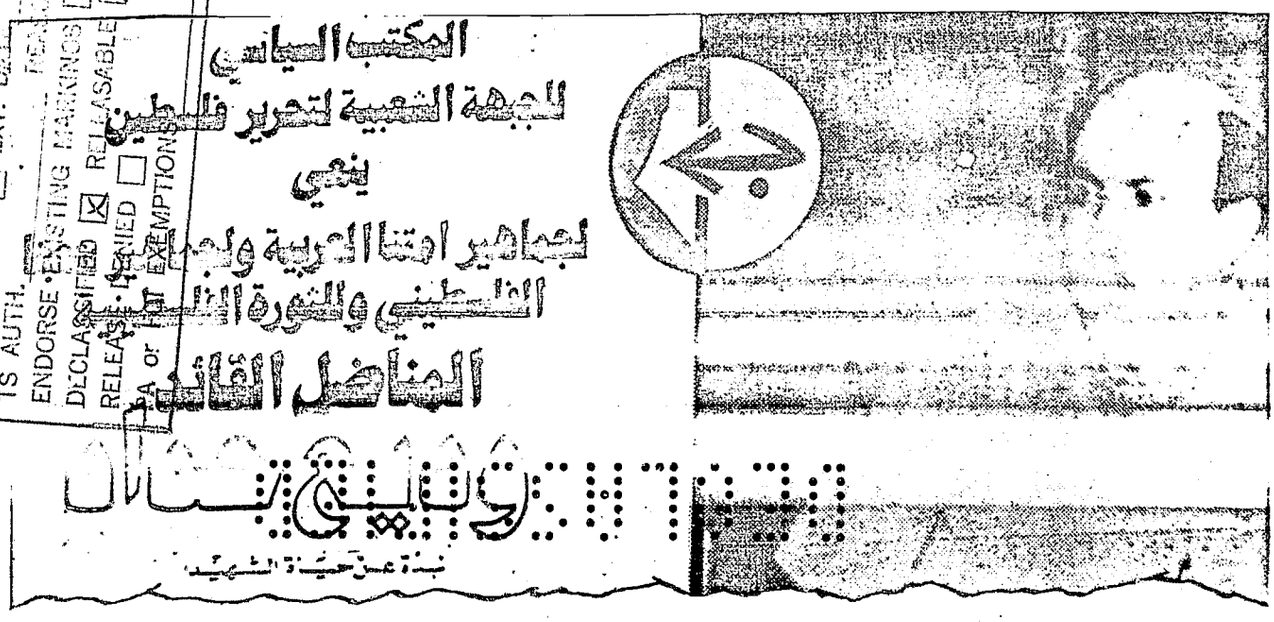

Associated Press

Poster distributed by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine announced the death of Dr. Wadi Haddad